

July 6, 2018

Jose Rodriguez, Specialist
Los Angeles Unified School District
Charter Schools Division
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90023

RE: Inquiry About Allegations of Violations of the Brown Act

Dear Mr. Rodriguez:

I am in receipt of your letter dated June 29, 2018, that is entitled "Inquiry About Allegations of Violations of the Brown Act" to the Excelencia Charter Academy ("Excelencia"). In your letter you stated that the Charter School Division ("CSD") has been made aware of allegations of violation of the Brown Act against Excelencia by United Teachers Los Angeles ("UTLA").

You request that we respond to your letter as follows: 1) Provide a response to the allegations presented in the letter from UTLA; 2) Provide meeting agendas and minutes for all board, and committee meetings from June 2017 to June 2018; 3) Provide evidence the Governing Board holds its meetings at a location(s) and in a manner that complies with teleconferencing, closed session, and access and reasonable accommodation requirements and the public has access to the meetings from a location(s) within the jurisdictional boundaries of LAUSD; 4) Provide evidence the Board/school posts agendas for regular and special meetings in a timely manner and appropriate location(s); and, 5) Provide evidence the Board complies with closed session requirements.

We are pleased to provide the following responses.

1. Our attorney sent a response to the letter from the law firm of Bush Gottlieb who represent UTLA and it is included here as Attachment A. In the letter, we explained to UTLA that their accusations were factually inaccurate with an exception of agendas not being posted at teleconference locations on two occasions, March 7, 2018 and April 26, 2018. We cured those technical violations of the Brown Act by holding a Special Meeting on June 12, 2018, where the action items from those Board meetings in March and April were agendized, discussed fully, thoroughly considered, and voted upon.
2. Meeting agendas and minutes for all Board and Committee meetings from June 2017 to June 2018 are on-line at <https://www.excelenciacharteracademy.org/new-blog/> and <https://www.excelenciacharteracademy.org/committee-meetings/>.

3. Since June 2017, our Governing Board has held its meetings at four locations in Los Angeles:
 - a. 324 North McDonnell Avenue. This is the location of East LA Rising, Inc., a non-profit organization formerly the East LA Boys and Girls Club. There is full accessibility to the public at this location – we have had more than 30 members of the public present for a meeting at this location. The building is ADA-compliant. Board meeting agendas were posted at this location in compliance with the Brown Act.
 - b. 4538 East Cesar E. Chavez Avenue. This is the location of the La Caretta Restaurant. It is owned and operated by a former Board member, Samuel Robles. The restaurant closes at 5:00 pm, but the doors are kept open during our meetings. Additionally, since the restaurant is not open for business during the hours of the meeting, people who are present are under no obligation to purchase anything to attend and it is ADA-compliant. Board meeting agendas were posted at this location in compliance with the Brown Act.
 - c. 1016 South Fresno Street. This location is the Ramon Garcia Recreation Center. It is open to the public and accessible to all. Board meeting agendas were posted at this location in compliance with the Brown Act.
 - d. 312 North Records Avenue. This is the location of the Collegiate Charter High School of Los Angeles and Belvedere Middle School. As LAUSD knows, this location is ADA-compliant and open to the public. Board meeting agendas were posted at this location in compliance with the Brown Act.

As for teleconferencing rules, as you will see from reviewing the Board agendas and minutes, there have been a majority of the Board within the LAUSD jurisdiction for all meetings. Remote participation sites are listed on all agendas. Please also see Attachment B for a list of Board member teleconference locations.

4. The agendas for Board meetings have been posted at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled regular meetings and at least 24 hours in advance of the special meetings at the location of the meeting and on the Excelencia website. Proof of such posting on the website can be seen on the webpages referenced above in item number two. The dates the meetings were posted are “date stamped” above the meeting notice in light gray.
5. Excelencia has not had a closed session in a Board meeting or a Board Committee meeting.

I would also like to note that the Excelencia Board has had several training sessions on the Brown Act in 2017 and are scheduling a full training for all Board members later this year. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns. Excelencia strives to follow the law and to be transparent.



EXCELENCIA
CHARTER ACADEMY

Sincerely,

Ana Lasso, Board Chairperson

"A TK-8 tuition-free, public charter school driven by academic excellence for all."